

Early daylight-saving not saving electricity, utilities say

Reuters (April 4)

Moving daylight-saving time to earlier in the year has had little impact on energy savings in the United States, according to early reports from utilities.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 included a provision that changed the traditional start date of daylight-saving time from the first Sunday in April to March 11. The provision intended to reduce electricity consumption.

But three weeks later, utilities are reporting little change in energy consumption.

"We haven't seen any measurable impact," said Jason Cuevas, spokesman for Southern Co., one of the nation's largest power companies.

While there may have been a slight drop-off in electricity use because households used less light in the evening hours, lighting only amounts to about 10 percent of overall energy consumption in a household. Morning usage may also have increased, offsetting any potential savings.

"There might have been a small increase in morning lighting, and a slightly larger decline in evening lighting usage," said a spokeswoman at New Jersey utility Public Service Enterprise Group Inc., but that modest decline will have no impact on its overall sales or earnings